



Ecosystem Goal Team Status and Plans

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Outline



- 2003 NOAA Strategic Plan
- Vision
- Compelling National Issues
- Mission Goal Outcomes
- Key Gaps
- Recent Accomplishments
- Strategies
- Socio-economic Benefits



2003 NOAA Strategic Plan



The NOAA *Strategic Plan* identifies the Ecosystem Mission Goal as:

- ***To protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management.***

Three strategic objectives further define this mission goal:

- Protect and restore ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources;
- Recover protected species; and
- Rebuild and maintain sustainable fisheries.

Alternative under consideration:

- “Protect, restore and govern the use of coastal and ocean resources through an ecosystem approach to management.”
 - *Minor change that refocuses on protecting marine ecosystems.*
- Remove objectives because program structure sufficiently represents these concepts. .



Vision



To adopt and advance an ecosystem approach to management:

- An ecosystem approach to management is adaptive, geographically specified, takes account of ecosystem knowledge and uncertainties, consider multiple external influences, and strives to balance diverse societal objectives.
- The transition to an ecosystem approach to management needs to be incremental and collaborative.

Desired end state/outcomes to an ecosystem approach:

- Healthy ecosystems (including living marine resources and habitat).
- Increased social/economic value of marine environment and resources (including productive fisheries and beneficial coastal development).
- Well informed public that trusts NOAA.



Compelling National Issues



- The quality of life of the American people is greatly affected by decisions governing human interactions with oceans and the atmosphere. The risk of making poor decisions is compounded by:
 - population and business expansion in highly vulnerable areas like coasts
 - competing demands for access to marine resources
 - technologies that modify the environment in unanticipated ways and
 - high expectations about public health and safety, environmental quality and ecosystem health.
- It is imperative that we make progress towards an ecosystem orientation. This requires:
 - Enhancing our current scientific and decision-making ability to fulfill mandates for trust resources.
 - Conducting research on ecological, social, and economic processes geared toward advancing integrated analyses of alternatives.
 - Developing new technologies to reduce or eliminate undesirable impacts on marine ecosystems and
 - Integrating application of our multiple ecosystem mandates within NOAA as well as with universities, industry, NGOs, and local, state, and federal agencies, by developing “place-based” demonstration projects.



Mission Goal Outcomes



Outcome Measures

- Increased number of coastal and marine ecosystems maintained at a healthy and sustainable level.
- Increased social and economic value of the marine environment and resources (e.g., seafood, recreation, and tourism).
- Increased number of acres and stream-miles restored for coastal and ocean species.
- Increased number of protected species in a stable condition or an upward trend.
- Increased number of managed species that are at optimum levels.
- Improved ecological conditions in coastal and ocean protected areas.
- Increased number of regional ecosystems identified and monitored with agreed-to indicators of ecosystem health.
- Increased number of ecosystems where ecological functions and linkage to human activities and impacts are adequately understood for management purposes.
- Increased number of models linking climate/weather/atmosphere with ecosystem/hydrology made operational to assess and predict natural and human-induced changes in the ocean and coastal environment.
- Increased number of coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes areas (including coastal watersheds) with Federal, state, and local government or nongovernmental management plans using ecosystem best management practices and approaches.
- **QUESTION – Do we need all of these?**



Key Gaps or Deficiencies



- Assessments identified a \$1.6 billion gap for the Ecosystem Goal, including deficiencies for habitat restoration, corals, protected areas, coastal resource management, invasive species, aquaculture, ecosystem research, undersea research and exploration, protected species management, fisheries management, and enforcement.
- Recommended forming an Ecosystem Program Planning and Integration office to address deficiencies in planning for and coordinating across the Ecosystem team.



Recent Accomplishments



NOT SURE HOW TO ANSWER – These are things we said we would do in the Program Plan. Have we started any of them.?

Actionable Plan for Ecosystem Integration (contingent on staffing and funding)

- Establish NOAA Ecosystem Program Planning and Integration office to oversee regional ecosystem planning and coordination, and to support Ecosystem Goal Team -- by 1 April 2004.
- Initiate interagency planning for Regional Ecosystem Councils -- by 1 June 2004.
- Agree on delineation of regional ecosystems -- by 1 October 2004.
- Designate NOAA regional ecosystem coordinators and begin coordinating NOAA regional ecosystem activity – by 1 October 2004.
- Establish formal operational steps for an ecosystem approach -- by 1 January 2005.
- Initially convene the Regional Ecosystem Councils – by 1 April 2005.
- Begin implementing priority steps through the Regional Ecological Councils – by 1 October 2006.
- Establish NOAA LME unit within Ecosystem PPI -- by 1 October 2006.
- Complete and implement all regional ecosystem plans – by 30 September 2010.
- Maintain Regional Ecosystem Councils to monitor outcomes and adapt ecosystem plans – 1 October 2010 and beyond.



Strategies to Address Outcomes



Ecosystem Goal FY06-10 Strategy to Achieve Outcomes:

- Builds upon core capabilities in Science and Governance.
- Implemented through the “doers”: the eleven programs within the Ecosystem Goal
- Establishes Regional Ecosystem Council to achieve integration and to advance an ecosystem approach.
- Demonstrates proactive NOAA leadership in response to key recommendations of the US Commission on Ocean Policy.
- Think and Act Globally – per the AGM



Strategy



Ecosystem Program, Planning and Integration

- **Purpose** – To provide a vehicle for place-based integration of NOAA's ecosystem activities, supporting ecosystem needs of the PPBS process, advancing an ecosystem approach domestically and internationally, and demonstrating leadership relative to the anticipated Oceans Commission's recommendation on Regional Ecosystem Councils.

Adjustments

- Establish Ecosystem Program Planning and Integration office.
- Provide support for regional ecosystem planning and coordination, including Regional Ecosystem Councils.
- Fund planning processes and decision support tools.
- Provide support for international Large Marine Ecosystem projects
- Funding also requested for critical program deficiencies.



Socio-economic Benefits



- Looking for suggestions.



How Stakeholders Contribute: Instructions



- Break up into small discussion groups of about 10 people each
- Each group answers ~4 questions provided to them
- Before end of session, reconvene together to consolidate small group answers for this Mission Goal
- Present consolidated (but not necessarily limited to consensus) responses in afternoon session to all